

WASHINGTON STATE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY

BYLAWS

Background and Authorization:

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy was established through specific funding from the Washington Legislature in the 1983-85 biennial budget, in the appropriation for The Evergreen State College. This funding was in direct response to House Floor Resolution 82-176, requesting the Council on Postsecondary Education (predecessor to the Higher Education Coordinating Board) to study ". . .the potential of focusing higher education's resources in assisting state government, through some readily available means."

The Institute has been in operation since September 1983 and is located at The Evergreen State College. The Institute is altogether non-partisan.

Mission:

The mission of the Washington State Institute for Public Policy is to assist policymakers, particularly those in the legislature, in making informed judgments about important, long-term issues facing Washington State.

Through its activities the Institute will. . .

- *benefit the state's policymakers by making available to them timely, useful and practical research products of the very highest quality; and*
- *enrich the academic environment by involving faculty and students at Washington's public and private universities in activities that meet the information and applied research needs of the state's policymakers.*

Toward these ends the Institute will. . .

- *initiate, sponsor, conduct, and publish research which is directly useful to policymakers;*
- *organize conferences on current state issues which bring together policymakers and leading academics;*

- *manage reviews and evaluations of technical and scientific topics as they relate to major long-term issues facing the state; and*
- *seek to strengthen the links between state government and Washington's academic community in the interest of more informed policymaking and more relevant academic research.*

The Board of the Institute, representing the legislature, as well as the executive and the academic community, determines which of the important issues facing the state will occupy the attention and resources of the Institute. The Board assumes the major role in directing the Institute's activities, consistent with this mission.

Governance:

A Board of Directors governs the Institute, appoints the Institute director, establishes practical research priorities for the Institute and reviews and provides oversight for all Institute projects. The Institute Board is made up of the following sixteen members:

Two senators from each caucus of the Washington State Senate (four senators);

Two representatives from each caucus of the Washington State House of Representatives (four representatives);

Two individuals appointed by the Governor (preferably, state agency directors);

President of The Evergreen State College and three provosts, or designated representatives, of the University of Washington, Washington State University, and, on a rotating basis, from the regional public universities;

Director of Senate Committee Services; and

Director of the Office of Program Research in the House of Representatives.

The position of chair of the Board rotates every two years between the director of the House Office of Program Research and the director of Senate Committee Services.

Legislators serve as long as the Majority Leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives designate them as members of the Institute Board. University members of the Board serve three-year terms, which may be renewed at the discretion of the university in question. Members of the Board appointed by the Governor serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

The Institute Board meets at least quarterly, or more frequently when relevant issues arise. The Board chair convenes and facilitates Board meetings. As much as practicable, Board decisions are by consensus. The chair serves as a point of contact between the Board and the College president on matters of governance.

The Institute director, appointed by and reporting to the Board, is responsible for all operations of the Institute, including hiring and supervision of staff, contracting with university and other researchers, project management, and liaison with legislative leadership and legislative staff. Should a vacancy arise in the position of director, the chair shall convene a Board meeting.

For business and personnel matters, the Institute director works through the office of the president at The Evergreen State College. The Institute Board, however, is the decision authority for all matters affecting the Institute.

Location:

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy is located on the campus of The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. The Institute is one of several "public service" arms of the College.

Resources:

Core funding for Institute operations and projects is contained in the biennial operating budget of The Evergreen State College. New projects are initiated and developed in the following ways:

- **Legislative requests:** Legislative committee chairs, legislative leadership and individual legislators can request the Institute to undertake a project on public policy topics likely to come before the legislature. Topics should be those that are amenable to the skills and focus of applied academic research. The Institute director will consult with the members of the Institute Board to decide which requests can be acted upon within existing Institute resources.
- **Legislative mandates:** Directions for new Institute projects can also be written into authorizing legislation and/or appropriations bills. Resources to implement these mandated projects are contained either in the Institute's funding through the appropriations for The Evergreen State College or in the appropriations for other state agencies. In the latter instances, line items specify that the state agency should contract with the Institute to implement the studies or projects named.

Unlike public policy institutes in other higher education settings, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy **does not** pursue non-state funding for policy studies, unless specific projects and proposed funding applications are approved by the Institute Board. The Institute's major mission is to ensure that the needs of the Washington Legislature for high quality, non-partisan, applied academic research on relevant public policy issues are met.

*Adopted by the Institute Board
April 23, 1998*

RESOLUTION

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 82-176, by Representatives McDonald, Heck, Dawson and Pruitt:

WHEREAS, The state's higher education institutions are a source of knowledge that can be applied to the solving of the state's economic and social problems; and

WHEREAS, The development and administration of public policy by state government is enhanced through the availability of the best possible knowledge base; and

WHEREAS, The important knowledge resource of our higher education institutions is not readily available to state policymakers and administrators; and

WHEREAS, Other states have developed means to focus higher education resources to assist in solving public problems;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the House of Representatives, That the potential of focusing higher education resources in assisting state government, through some readily available means, be studied by the Council for Postsecondary Education and a report provided to the 1983 regular session of the Legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution be transmitted by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives to the Council for Postsecondary Education.

On motion of Mr. McDonald, House Resolution No. 82-176 was adopted.

1982 Legislative Session